Grammar Companion

First Flight — Class 10 (2026–27)

CBSE Syllabus Grammar + Chapter-wise Grammar in Context

Original practice exercises with full answer key — for classroom and self-study use

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Name: _____

Class & Section: _____

School: _____

Roll No.: _____

Part A — CBSE Syllabus Grammar (10 Marks)

Covers the five grammar areas prescribed in the Class 10 English (Code 184) syllabus: Determiners, Tenses, Modals, Subject–Verb Concord, and Reported Speech. Each topic includes a rule summary and a practice set in CBSE Gap-Filling / Editing / Transformation style, contextualised using themes from the First Flight chapters. Answer keys are collected at the end of each topic.

Determiners

- Determiners (a/an, the, this/these, some/any, each/every, much/many, etc.) come before a noun to specify it.
- Use 'a/an' for a non-specific singular countable noun; 'the' for something already known or unique.
- 'Much' is used with uncountable nouns, 'many' with countable plural nouns; 'a few/a little' show a small positive amount.

Practice Exercise

1. Lencho looked up at ___ (a/the) sky, watching the clouds gather over his farm.

2. There wasn't ___ (much/many) hope left after the hailstorm destroyed the crop.

3. ___ (Each/Every) letter he wrote reached the same kind-hearted postmaster.

4. Nelson Mandela believed ___ (a/the) freedom of one man is tied to the freedom of all.

5. The young seagull had ___ (a few/a little) doubts before its first flight.

6. Anne Frank kept ___ (a/an) diary that became her closest companion.

7. Goa has ___ (much/many) coconut plantations along its coast.

8. The little girl had never travelled ___ (this/these) far from her village alone.

Answer Key

1. the
2. much
3. Every
4. the
5. a few
6. a
7. many
8. this

Tenses

- Present, past and future tenses each have simple, continuous, perfect and perfect-continuous forms.
- Use the past simple for a completed action at a definite past time; the present perfect for a past action with present relevance.
- The past continuous describes an action in progress when another action happened.

Practice Exercise

1. By the time the rain stopped, the hailstorm ___ (already / destroy) the entire harvest.
2. Mandela ___ (fight) against apartheid for most of his adult life.
3. The seagull ___ (watch) the other birds fly when it decided to try itself.
4. Anne Frank ___ (write) in her diary every single day while in hiding.
5. Every year, families in Goa ___ (harvest) the coconut crop in early summer.
6. The little girl ___ (never / ride) a bus alone before that day.
7. While the conductor ___ (collect) tickets, she watched the world go by.
8. By next year, she ___ (grow) old enough to travel anywhere on her own.

Answer Key

1. had already destroyed
2. fought
3. was watching
4. wrote
5. harvest
6. had never ridden
7. was collecting
8. will have grown

Modals

- Modals (can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would, shall) express ability, permission, possibility, necessity or advice.
- 'Must' shows strong obligation; 'should' gives advice; 'may/might' show possibility; 'can/could' show ability or polite requests.

Practice Exercise

1. A farmer ___ (must/might) have faith even when the harvest fails.
2. You ___ (should/can) always stand up for what is right, as Mandela did.
3. A young bird ___ (must/can) learn to fly with patience and practice.
4. Readers ___ (may/should) never fully know a person from their diary alone.
5. Visitors ___ (must/might) enjoy the coconut-based dishes of Goa.
6. A child ___ (should/must) not travel alone without informing an adult, generally speaking.

Answer Key

1. must
2. should
3. can
4. may
5. might
6. should

Subject–Verb Concord

- A singular subject takes a singular verb; a plural subject takes a plural verb.
- Collective nouns (family, team, crowd) usually take a singular verb when acting as one unit.
- With 'either...or' / 'neither...nor', the verb agrees with the nearer subject.

Practice Exercise

1. Neither the farmer nor his neighbours ___ (was/were) prepared for the storm.
2. The committee ___ (was/were) unanimous in honouring Mandela's courage.
3. Either the pilot or the instructors ___ (was/were) responsible for the training.
4. Each of the diary entries ___ (reveal/reveals) a new side of Anne's character.
5. The family of coconut farmers ___ (work/works) together during harvest season.
6. The conductor, along with the passengers, ___ (was/were) kind to the frightened child.

Answer Key

1. were
2. was
3. were
4. reveals
5. works
6. was

Reported Speech

- Statements: shift tense back one step, change pronouns, and adjust time/place words (today→that day, here→there).
- Questions: use 'if/whether' for yes-no questions, or the question word itself for wh-questions; word order becomes statement order, and the question mark is dropped.
- Commands and requests: use 'to' + base verb for commands, and 'not to' + base verb for negative commands; reporting verbs like 'ordered', 'requested', 'advised' replace 'said'.

Practice Exercise

1. Statement — Lencho said, "I need a hundred pesos to sow my field again."
2. Statement — Mandela said, "I am ready to give my life for this cause."
3. Question — The instructor asked the pilot, "Can you see the runway?"
4. Question — She asked her friend, "Why do you keep a diary?"
5. Command — The conductor said to the girl, "Sit down and hold the rail."
6. Request — She said to the driver, "Please stop at the next village."

Answer Key

1. Lencho said that he needed a hundred pesos to sow his field again.
2. Mandela said that he was ready to give his life for that cause.
3. The instructor asked the pilot if he could see the runway.
4. She asked her friend why she kept a diary.

5. The conductor told the girl to sit down and hold the rail.
6. She requested the driver to stop at the next village.

Part B — Chapter-wise Grammar in Context

Each First Flight prose chapter is paired with a grammar structure drawn naturally from its language and themes — beyond the five syllabus topics — for wider practice. Sentences are original, written around each chapter's events and characters, not quoted from the textbook.

A Letter to God — Prepositions & Conjunctions

- Prepositions (in, on, at, through, despite) show relationships of place, time or manner.
- Conjunctions (because, although, so, and, but) join clauses to show cause, contrast or addition.

Practice Exercise

1. The farmer worked hard ___ (through/at) the entire growing season.

2. ___ (Because/Although) the hail destroyed his crop, Lencho still believed in God's help.

3. He walked ___ (into/onto) the post office to hand in his letter.

4. The postmaster helped him ___ (despite/into) having very little money himself.

5. Lencho was disappointed, ___ (so/but) he wrote an angry follow-up letter.

Answer Key

1. through
2. Although
3. into
4. despite
5. so

Nelson Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom — Active & Passive Voice

- In the passive voice, the object of an active sentence becomes the subject, and 'by + agent' is optional.
- Use passive voice to emphasise the action or result rather than who performed it.

Practice Exercise

1. Change to passive: 'Apartheid denied millions of people their basic rights.'

2. Change to passive: 'The nation elected Mandela as its first Black president.'

3. Change to passive: 'Oppression cannot destroy a person's inner freedom.'

4. Change to active: 'The struggle for equality was led by countless unnamed heroes.'

Answer Key

1. Millions of people were denied their basic rights by apartheid.
2. Mandela was elected as the nation's first Black president.
3. A person's inner freedom cannot be destroyed by oppression.

4. Countless unnamed heroes led the struggle for equality.

Stories About Flying — Clauses (Adverb & Noun Clauses)

- An adverb clause modifies a verb and often begins with 'when', 'because', 'although', 'if'.
- A noun clause functions as a subject or object and often begins with 'that', 'what', 'whether'.

Practice Exercise

1. Identify the clause type: 'When the storm cleared, the pilot finally saw land.'
2. Identify the clause type: 'What the young seagull needed most was courage.'
3. Combine using 'because': 'The bird was afraid. It had never flown before.'
4. Combine using 'although': 'The pilot was lost. He remained calm.'

Answer Key

1. Adverb clause of time.
2. Noun clause (subject of the sentence).
3. The bird was afraid because it had never flown before.
4. Although the pilot was lost, he remained calm.

From the Diary of Anne Frank — Direct–Indirect Speech (extended)

- When reporting speech written in a diary, treat it as a statement: shift tense, pronouns, and time references.
- Reporting verbs can be varied (wrote, confided, admitted) instead of always using 'said'.

Practice Exercise

1. Anne wrote, "I want to go on living even after my death."
2. She confided, "I don't want to be like most girls of my age."
3. Anne wrote in her diary, "Paper has more patience than people."
4. She admitted, "I have not spoken a word of truth to anyone here."

Answer Key

1. Anne wrote that she wanted to go on living even after her death.
2. She confided that she did not want to be like most girls of her age.
3. Anne wrote in her diary that paper had more patience than people.
4. She admitted that she had not spoken a word of truth to anyone there.

Glimpses of India — Degrees of Comparison & Adjectives

- Comparative adjectives (+ 'er'/'more') compare two things; superlatives (+ 'est'/'most') compare three or more.
- Descriptive adjectives add detail about size, origin, or quality of a noun.

Practice Exercise

1. Coastal Goan food is ___ (spicy - comparative) than food from the northern hills.

2. Rice is one of the ___ (common - superlative) staples across the country.
3. The plantations looked ___ (green - comparative) after the monsoon rains.
4. Of all the regional cuisines, this one felt the ___ (unique - superlative).

Answer Key

1. spicier
2. most common
3. greener
4. most unique

Madam Rides the Bus — Question Formation & Tag Questions

- Wh-questions begin with a question word and invert the subject and auxiliary verb.
- Tag questions are short questions added to a statement, using the opposite polarity of the main verb.

Practice Exercise

1. Form a wh-question: 'The conductor collected the tickets.' (ask about who)
2. Form a yes/no question: 'She had never travelled alone before.'
3. Add a question tag: 'The bus was crowded, ___?'
4. Add a question tag: 'She won't feel afraid next time, ___?'

Answer Key

1. Who collected the tickets?
2. Had she never travelled alone before?
3. wasn't it
4. will she